



**United States Attorney's Office
Eastern District of Michigan**

**Barbara L. McQuade
United States Attorney**

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Gina Balaya - (313) 226-9758
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DEARBORN DOCTOR PLEADS GUILTY TO HEALTHCARE FRAUD, IMMIGRATION AND TAX OFFENSES

A 50-year-old medical doctor from Dearborn, Michigan pleaded guilty yesterday to defrauding Medicare, and making false statements in immigration and tax matters, United States Attorney Barbara L. McQuade announced today.

McQuade was joined in the announcement by Special Agent in Charge Andrew G. Arena, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Special Agent in Charge Maurice Aouate, Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation, Special Agent in Charge Brian Moskowitz, Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Special Agent in Charge Lamont Pugh, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General.

Pleading guilty before Senior U.S. District Judge Lawrence P. Zatkoff, was Ali S. Makki, M.D., a medical doctor practicing in Dearborn, Michigan.

According to information provided to the court at the time of the guilty plea hearing, from July 2004 through September 2009, Dr. Makki knowingly submitted false

claims to Medicare concerning the number and quality of x-rays provided to his Medicare patients, thereby obtaining \$113,777 to which he was not entitled. In addition, Dr. Makki admitted that he falsified an immigration form for a patient applying for naturalization in an effort to exempt his patient from certain requirements necessary for naturalization, and underreported his income by not reporting certain cash receipts on his 2003 federal income tax return.

Under the terms of the plea agreement, Dr. Makki faces, among other things, up to 30 months in federal prison. He will remain free on bond pending sentencing, which is scheduled for September 30, 2010 in Port Huron, Michigan.

The criminal investigation of this case was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Office of Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division.

The United States also resolved Dr. Makki's civil liability under the False Claims Act and civil forfeiture statutes, resulting in Makki's forfeiture of commercial real property with an appraised value of more than \$4.7 million in Canton and Dearborn, and approximately \$76,000 in cash. According to the publicly filed civil forfeiture complaint, the United States alleged that Ali Makki engaged in drug diversion and various fraudulent billing schemes, including billing for services that were not rendered and for unnecessary tests, and writing false progress reports in patient files.

U.S. Attorney Barbara L. McQuade praised the result in this case, and said, ""We are paying close attention to Medicare billing records, and we will prosecute doctors like Dr. Makki who abuse the system."

SAC Arena said, "Doctors are in a position of public trust and this plea represents the second conviction and betrayal of that trust for this subject. The FBI, along with our law enforcement partners, are committed to aggressively investigating allegations of healthcare fraud as well as other violations of federal laws."

SAC Pugh said, "Given that physicians are viewed as leaders in their community it is disturbing to uncover one who has violated the law, the public's trust and the honor of their profession. The Office of Inspector General will continue to remain vigilant in our efforts to ensure that conduct of this nature is exposed and addressed."

The civil case was handled by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Peter Ziedas and Joan Hartman and the criminal case was handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Craig Weier.